

During the past several weeks we have debated this measure, and we have properly spent substantial time on it because this is no small item. It does not just deal with the billions and billions of dollars. The welfare problem, the welfare challenge, deals with much money. It deals with the great set of natural and national resources—not just financial but human resources.

The fact of the matter is that the United States of America can ill afford to compete on the international scene, can ill afford to be a part of the challenge for productivity as one nation will seek to do and do better than another nation, if we have so many of our players that are not really on the field. We would not think of sending our team out to play another team for a Saturday or Sunday afternoon football game with half of our team not taking the field, not being capable of participating, and being ruled out of the system. Well, our team is a big team, and it is a strong team. It is a capable team in the United States. But we have too many that have been consigned to bench duty without any possibility of making it to the field. And we will not win in the competition of the international arena unless we find a way to bring people into productivity and out of poverty.

So the real challenge we face is changing the system, and changing it not just by tinkering around the edges. No rearrangement of the deck chairs on the welfare *Titanic* will get the job done. We need to have the kind of profound changes that will move people out of despair into industry, and out of hopelessness into opportunity.

So we will vote on a clear question today, and that is whether we will continue to fund the horror that came to define the United States welfare system and which came to detail the lives of individuals trapped in this system. Whether we have the courage to change that or not will be the real vote which we make today. I believe we have the courage to do that which is right, and I believe we will do so. And I believe we ought to do so.

I would say that this is not an ideal welfare bill. This is not something that is in my judgment the best that could be done. There are probably changes that almost every Member of this Chamber would make in the bill. I believe that the right thing to do would have been far broader, not just block granting AFDC with an option to block grant food stamps. In my judgment we should have had AFDC, food stamps, Medicaid and Supplemental Security Income. The big four of welfare should all have been in this bill, all reformed at the same time for a variety of reasons, such as stopping the insanity of entitlement spending. We should avoid cost shifting that would take people out of one program in which we removed the entitlement status and shove them over into another program which has remained as an entitlement. That kind of cost shifting should not be allowed. It should be avoided.

I would have preferred a more comprehensive bill. Obviously, I would have preferred one where the block grant for food stamps was mandated. I would have preferred one where we had Supplemental Security Income. I would have preferred a bill that would have had a more significant breadth, that had Medicaid in it as well. But we are making some first steps, and they are important first steps.

One of the important first steps is the reduction in bureaucracy here; the reduction in the redtape, the reduction in this micromanagement, this intermeddling micromanagement from the Federal Government which makes it very difficult for the States to adopt policies that will really make a difference and makes it very expensive when you have to comply with hundreds of pages of Federal bureaucratic redtape. It is expensive. Instead of money getting to the truly needy, instead of the resource making it to the population that wants to move from welfare to work, sometimes the resource gets clogged in the bottleneck of the bureaucracy and the money is spent there instead of being spent on the poor. We are going to reduce the number of regulatory impositions from Washington substantially. This bill will improve our ability to deliver the real kind of help that people need. That is important—maximum State flexibility.

Second, I believe it is important that we will end an entitlement. This philosophy that we do not care how much it costs, that as many people as can meet certain criteria are just entitled to self-appropriate to themselves—that has to stop. It is a major thing. First, reduce the bureaucracy; second, end entitlement; third, we are going to require work far more pervasively than ever before.

The American people have told us with a clarity that is unmistakable. We must require work, and, of course, provide the flexibility so that people can do in the various States and communities of this country what works there, not what somebody in Washington wants to impose, but to do simply what works.

This bill makes a statement that Washington does not have all the answers. We are now looking to the communities and the States to do what works there, to tailor programs, and to be experimental stations to say we will try this, and, if it works here, others might want to try it. But it should not be imposed on them because people should have an opportunity to do what works to move people from poverty to productivity. Washington, it may be said, has been the mad scientist seeking to impose its will. But the truth of the matter is we need to provide an opportunity for States to do that which works.

Well, this bill comes with an explicit admonition as well. This bill recognizes that Government alone will not solve these problems. And I think that

it is important for us to express nationally and as a part of policy that we really expect charitable and non-governmental institutions in this culture to rally to address this problem, and not expect the problem to be solved fully by Government.

So we have in this bill a specific invitation to private charities, nongovernmental entities, even faith-based organizations to participate in the solution of this serious challenge to the success of this society in the next century. And I believe that is a major step forward.

We have an opportunity. We have an opportunity to do something that is substantially in the best interests of the people of this country, something they have yearned for us to do. That is to change a welfare system which is badly broken, which has been the keeper of the poor and has kept people poor, which has managed to find more people in poverty after its great effort than less people in poverty.

The war on poverty has resulted in the children of America being taken as prisoners. We have to do something, and we have to do it well.

As I previously stated, this welfare reform bill is not perfect, but it does take the first steps. The lack of perfection in this bill, the absence of a mandate that the Food Stamp Program be sent to all the States, the lack of reforms to the SSI Program in the bill, are some of a number of things which keep it from being perfect but should not keep it from being passed.

This bill gives us the opportunity to say, "Let us pass this bill, but let the imperfections drive us to keep our focus and in the next year to continue to improve and extend it."

There has been a lot of talk in the last few weeks during the welfare reform debate about money and about resources. We know how desperately important it is for us to balance the budget, but the ultimate importance of this bill is not money. The savings we are talking about are the savings in lives and opportunities and, through those savings, the future of America. Our task in this welfare reform measure is then to save the lives and opportunities of citizens. To pass this welfare reform bill today would be a real step toward saving lives, and we must support it and must be driven by its imperfections to do even more when we reconvene next year.

THE DEATH OF STATE SENATOR JOHN PLEWA

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I am deeply saddened by the loss of a dear friend and former colleague, State Senator John Plewa.

I had the pleasure of serving with John in the legislature for 10 years, and for 8 of them in the State senate. He represented the people of Wisconsin, first in the assembly, and then in the

State senate, with dedication and devotion, and his constituents returned him to office at every election since he was first elected in 1972. At the time of his death, John had the fourth longest tenure among lawmakers currently serving in the Wisconsin Legislature.

John was a lifelong resident of Milwaukee, graduating from Don Bosco High School in 1963. He earned a bachelor of education degree in 1968 at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, and following that, taught history and social studies at Milwaukee Area Technical College prior to his service in the legislature.

A committed and passionate advocate for Wisconsin's families, John may be best remembered as the father of Wisconsin's family and medical leave law, which allows people to take time off from their job to provide assistance to a family member needing care, from newborns to an elderly relative—a law that helped pave the way for the Federal family leave law that was enacted in 1993.

His commitment to families in need went well beyond the family leave law. John was vice chair of the Senate Aging Committee when I chaired that body, and I saw first-hand his steadfast and effective support of long-term care reforms that help people with disabilities of all ages remain in their own homes with their families.

John was also vitally concerned with housing policy, serving on the board of Wisconsin's Housing and Economic Development Authority for 10 years. I had the pleasure of working with John in this area as well when we coauthored Wisconsin's Housing Trust Fund, to provide flexible help to families in need of decent, affordable housing.

John would have been 50 years old this Friday. But even though he did not live to celebrate that anniversary, he left Wisconsin an impressive legacy.

Today, thousands are able to take time from work to care for a family member without the fear of losing that job. Other families are finally able to afford a decent home. Wisconsin families, who otherwise might be forced apart because of a long-term disability, are able to remain together, and individuals needing long-term care, who otherwise might be forced to seek services in an institution, are able to remain in their homes. All because of John Plewa. Wisconsin families have lost one of their foremost champions, and I know they join in offering their sympathy to the friends and colleagues John leaves behind, to his staff, and most especially to John's wife Susan and their two sons.

We will miss him.

THE BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, the skyrocketing Federal debt, now soaring toward \$5 trillion, has been fueled for a generation now by bureaucratic hot air—and it is sort of like the weather—everybody talks about it but almost

nobody did much about it until immediately after the elections in November 1994.

But when the new 104th Congress convened this past January, the U.S. House of Representatives quickly approved a balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution. On the Senate side, all but one of the 54 Republicans supported the balanced budget amendment—that was the good news.

The bad news was that only 13 Democrats supported it—which killed hopes for a balanced budget amendment for the time being. Since a two-thirds vote—67 Senators, if all Senator's are present—is necessary to approve a constitutional amendment, the proposed Senate amendment failed by one vote. There will be another vote either this year or in 1996.

Here is today's bad debt boxscore:

As of the close of business Monday, September 18, the Federal debt—down to the penny—stood at exactly \$4,963,468,747,991.22 or \$18,841.41 for every man, woman, and child on a per capita basis.

Mr. DORGAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HUTCHISON). The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. At 9:30, the Senate is to go to the previous order. There is at least one other speaker, possibly two, so could we have a division of time so that everyone will have an opportunity to speak.

Mr. DORGAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for 4 minutes; I believe the Senator from Connecticut would like to speak for 4 minutes, and the Senator from Wyoming would like to speak for 4 minutes, and have the time adjusted at 9:30 to accommodate this request.

Mr. COCHRAN. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. COCHRAN. Reserving the right to object, Madam President, I was unable to hear the entire consent request. Could the Senator restate it?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It would extend morning business beyond 9:30.

Mr. COCHRAN. Madam President, I am constrained to object to that. We made it very clear last night what the times were. We have Senators who have rearranged schedules to be here.

Mr. DORGAN. I withdraw my request, Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Would it be possible to give 2 minutes to each of the three speakers?

Mr. DORGAN. Madam President, I request each of the three be allocated 2 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? The Chair hears none, and it is so ordered.

WELFARE REFORM

Mr. DORGAN. Madam President, I intend to vote for the welfare reform bill

today. It is not a perfect piece of legislation, but it does advance some of the issues that I think need to be advanced and begin some new directions that I think are necessary.

There is no disagreement in this Chamber about the proposition that the current welfare system does not work very well. There ought not be any disagreement in this Chamber either about the fact that when we change our welfare system, we ought to make sure we protect America's children.

There is a stereotype about welfare that is fundamentally inaccurate, that welfare is a woman who has 16 kids because it is profitable to have children; that welfare is some able-bodied person lying in a Lazy Boy recliner drinking beer, watching color television, and who is essentially slothful, indolent, and unwilling to work.

The fact is, that is not the statistical welfare recipient. The size of the average welfare family is almost identical to the size of the average American family.

Two-thirds of the people on welfare are kids under 16 years of age. As we go about trying to figure out how to change the system, we have to understand our obligation to protect children. We also need to provide the right incentives and to provide some hope to those who are hopeless, to extend a hand of help to those who are helpless, but also to say to them that welfare is temporary. We extend the hand of help because you need it, and it is to help you get up and out, to go get a job and be productive and be able to care for yourself.

These are the kinds of incentives we want to be included in this welfare reform bill. We have accomplished some of those goals, some of those goals we have not.

The Senator from Connecticut, who is going to speak for a couple of minutes, put a very important provision in this bill dealing with child care. That is enormously important and will allow a number of us to vote for this legislation. As I said, this bill is not perfect. I am concerned about the notion of block granting money, of wrapping up money and sending it to the States and saying, "By the way, here is some money you didn't collect. Go ahead and spend it."

I am concerned about a number of other things in the bill, but I do think it advances the welfare reform debate as it leaves the Senate. I do not know whether I will vote for it when it comes back from conference. I hope it will come out of conference as a good welfare reform bill, as well.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who seeks recognition?

Mr. THOMAS. Madam President, I rise in support of the welfare proposal that will be before us today. We have talked about it a very long time. Obviously, there are different views about how it should be implemented but, most of all, it is the first opportunity